

Support & Donations

Sanskrit @ St James wishes to acknowledge support from: The **Education Renaissance Trust** (ERT), the **Chetana Trust** and the **Indian Council for Cultural Relations** (ICCR). Our work is also supported by individual donors, ISER members, and volunteer helpers, as well as skilled professionals who offer discounted rates. Expressions of gratitude are received regularly from grateful students and teachers from around the world through our websites: www.sanskritexams.org.uk - in which you will also find an on-line library of videos. and www.sanskritatstjames.org.uk

A New 'Two Year Self Study Course for IGCSE'

Booklets with embedded MP3 and video links are available for students studying independently. Students should already be able to read and understand simple Sanskrit sentences, although knowledge of Panini grammar terminology is not required. Occasional email support is provided and some Skype support classes every 2 - 3 weeks by arrangement. For more information: <http://sanskritexams.org.uk/self-study-email-support.html>

Did you know?

...that a new word-for-word translation booklet for IGCSE set examination texts is now available from:

h.harper@stjameschools.co.uk

A new Director appointed for *Sanskrit @ St James*

In May 2019, after many years of devoted voluntary service, Paul Palmarozza decided to pass over the reins of leadership of *Sanskrit @ St James* to Helen Harper. Our thanks go to Paul for his dedication and unflinching perseverance, and his continuing support.

Connecting across the world

Helen writes: In November 2019, I travelled to three different regions of Nepal, visiting 9 schools, 8 gurukuls and 2 yoga centres. Organisation and guidance were provided by Dr Chintamani Yogi who continues to work actively and effectively to promote the Sanskrit IGCSE. My main aims were to reconnect with institutions previously visited, as well as new schools, highlighting the benefits of Sanskrit in today's world and encouraging participation in the IGCSE Sanskrit exams.



Class at Banepa gurukula

In addition to giving presentations at all the schools, I took part in three conferences involving adults interested in education, a consortium of gurukulas, and an event at Gokarna Gurukul attended, among others, by eleven regional mayors, and which included performances by the students of traditional music and Samavedic chanting. A proper understanding of Sanskrit, which is encouraged by the study for Sanskrit IGCSE, is a great asset in preserving of traditional Vedic knowledge. The associated, often sophisticated, English increases the long-term benefit for these young students.

At all the gatherings I recited slokas and where possible presented Powerpoints which included videos of St James' students reciting Sanskrit extracts. Many schools kindly also offered an opportunity for us to interact with classes and teachers. This year 80 Nepali students sat the Sanskrit IGCSE examination. More may come forward to be sponsored for the examination in 2020.

Dr Yogi says 'This programme of visits has broadened our view of the teaching of Sanskrit and we wish to have more programmes like this in the future. We wish to be involved in raising the world-wide awareness of Sanskrit and hope to increase Sanskrit teaching in schools in Nepal in the future.'

Adult Education News

On April 25th a new beginners' Sanskrit group will start on Saturday mornings at 9 am at the St James School, Olympia. This will aim at an IGCSE qualification within two years. *** Please tell anyone about this who you think might be interested!

In May this year a new Higher Level 2-year Sanskrit group will begin, probably at the same location. This will aim at the new post-IGCSE Higher exam now available. The set texts will include the Gita, Laws of Manu and the Upanishads. Further details are on our web site: www.sanskritatstjames.org.uk

Some other things we did last year:

• EXAM ENTRIES 2019

- IGCSE exam numbers are increasing! Candidates were mainly from Nepal and the UK, but also India, Netherlands, Australia, and Ireland.
- 20+ AS & 30+ A Levels, including St James boys and girls. Adults from South Africa and Malta took part, although most adults were from David Stollar's London adult group.

• PROMOTION OF SANSKRIT & CAMBRIDGE IGCSE

- Helen met with supporters from the Indian and Nepali communities in London to discuss how Sanskrit could be promoted in schools in India, Nepal and the UK. A new online Sanskrit IGCSE class with a few British Nepali adults has been started.
- Motilal Publishing House have been helping to interest Bangalore schools in Sanskrit IGCSE.
- Videos were made of St James Prep pupils and Senior Boys and Girls chanting Sanskrit verses, for use in presentations by representatives of St James Schools.

• TEXTBOOKS

- All the St James textbooks are being updated.
- In future, videos will be given away with each set of books.

Sanskrit Teacher Training

The three Hindu Vidya-peeth (HVP) schools, Nepal, are independent, English-medium schools providing values-based education. HVP students have participated in the Sanskrit IGCSE exams since 2014 with guidance provided by *Sanskrit @ St James*.

As part of this arrangement, two deputy head teachers, Mr Suman Pokhrel and Mr Manohar Sharma, recently spent a week at St James Senior Schools at Olympia and Ashford, and the Avanti House Academy School in Harrow, to see how the IGCSE course is taught in the UK. They visited 15 Senior



Visitors enjoying an English tea-break

Sanskrit lessons and a Junior Sanskrit assembly, and met with teachers to discuss teaching methods. They were impressed by the depth of understanding of the Sanskrit language and literature, and the quality of the teaching. Evenings involved reunions with many UK

volunteers who have helped at the HVP schools. Before returning to Nepal, the teachers spent a further week privately sightseeing and visiting relatives and friends, as well as attending a fund-raising event for the HVP-UK charity.

Both teachers expressed enormous gratitude to all who made the trip possible and have returned to their respective schools in Kathmandu



St James Teachers with a 'thank-you' from the two Nepal visitors

with renewed enthusiasm for the teaching of Sanskrit. Mr Pokhrel remarked: 'It was a lifetime experience to visit St James and other schools where Sanskrit is being taught. Sanskrit has been a uniting subject for east and west.' Mr Sharma said: 'The visit to St. James was really fruitful. It is a great achievement in my life and for the upliftment of Sanskrit at HVP Thali.'

Since this visit a workshop for IGCSE Sanskrit teachers has been held at HVP Central, with significant input from Mr Pokhrel.

NEW 'Sanskrit: An Introductory Course'

A new St James textbook is soon to be available for sale, published by Motilal Banarsidass Publishing House www.mlbd.in. It was designed to introduce new Year 7 students to Sanskrit when they join the Senior Schools and has been found to be a most effective, fast-track guide, smoothing the way for study of the Mahabharata text books. It will contain entertaining illustrations and be accompanied by videos presented by Gabriella Burnell.

Sanskrit @ St James depends for its work on charitable donations!

Can you support us in this work of promoting the teaching of Sanskrit and its formal examinations worldwide?

We have a *PayPal* account on www.sanskritatstjames.org.uk, or write or email us at the address overleaf.